

REMARKS

Claims 1-26 were pending in the application prior to the outstanding Office Action. Claims 1, 2, 8 and 9 are currently being canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the inventions therein. Claim 21 is being amended. Accordingly, claims 3-7 and 10-26 remain for the Examiner's consideration.

Claims 1, 2, 8 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Weinberg (U.S. Pat. 5,814,135) in view of Weinberg (U.S. Pat. 5,484,472) and Ebara (Japan 58-27654). While Applicants do not necessarily agree with these rejections, Applicants have canceled these claims (without prejudice or disclaimer to pursuing such claims in a continuing application), in order to expedite issuance of the remaining claims 3-7 and 10-26. Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 3-7 and 10-26 are allowed.

In light of the above, it is respectfully requested that a Notice of Allowance be issued. The Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned if he can assist in any way in expediting issuance of a patent.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any underpayment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 06-1325 for any matter in connection with this response, including any fee for extension of time which may be required.

Respectfully submitted,

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